



ANALYSIS OF THE OPINION ABOUT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF GOLF COURSES IN A TOURIST DESTINATION

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Abstract: The aim of this article is to analyse the opinions (and the differences among them) of golf players, golf courses managers and the general population about the economic and social impact of golf courses in a tourist destination (Alicante province, in Spain) from the data collected in three surveys. Golf players and golf courses managers have a more positive opinion about this economic and social impact than the population in the province. This is due to the knowledge of the first group about golf industry benefits. Therefore, communication about these social and economic benefits of golf courses has to be increased with the population in the area in order to improve their opinion about them.

Keywords: Golf courses, opinion, impacts, social, economic

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this article is to analyze the opinions (and the differences among them) of golf courses managers, golf players and the general population about economic and social impact of golf courses in a consolidated Spanish tourist destination (Alicante province), from the data collected in three surveys. Firstly, the relation of golf with

other economic sectors such as agriculture, construction and tourism is analyzed in order to evaluate the economic impact of golf. Secondly, golf influence in Alicante province has been reviewed and the opinions of the groups have been analyzed to study the opinion about golf social impact. Finally, the subjective view of the three groups has been studied with the purpose of setting golf socioeconomic effects.

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT OPINION

The research on the opinions about economic and social impact of golf courses in a tourist destination has become specific in the case of Alicante province, in Spain. A brief description of this area is given below, in order to get a better understanding of the situation.

Golf in Alicante province (Spain)

Alicante province covers an area of 5,818 km² and has a population of 1,825,264 inhabitants (INE 2007) and it is a leading European tourist destination. Alicante is a Spanish province that has shown one of the highest economic growths in the last decades. It has moved from the tenth place in the GNP Spanish classification for provinces in 1955 to the fourth position at present. This improvement was firstly (around 1970s) due to

the industrial sector. Later (since the 1980s), the service sector (tourism as the driving force) was responsible for this development. Furthermore, it is excellently communicated at present: it has an international airport, a wide motorway and highway network, several marinas and commercial ports and a rail network.

The main features of the two most important economic sectors (tourism and construction) in Alicante province are stated below. These two sectors, mainly, promote the development of golf courses in Alicante province.

The economic activity of Alicante province comes mainly from the service sector. This sector in the province produces 70% of GVA (INE 2005). Tourism is the key of Alicante economy. Tourism importance is higher in all the coastal regions, although many of the businesses have a seasonal

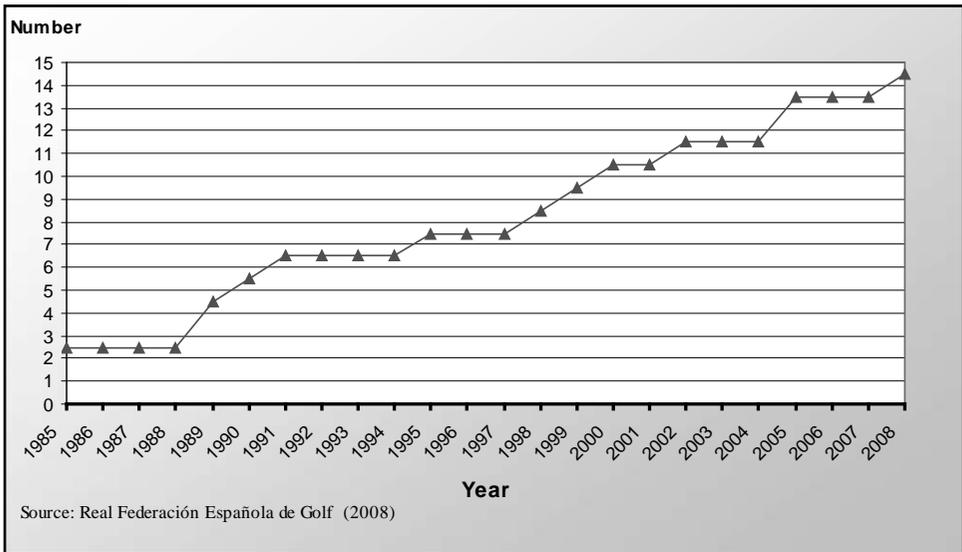


Figure 1 Golf courses evolution in Alicante (1985-2008)

character, concentrating its activity in the summer months. It also compensates the deficit in the trade balance and it is an important employment creator, since the tourist industry is intensive regarding labour factor (hotels and other types of accommodation, catering, transportation, travel agencies, etc.). Recent diversification from “sun and beach” mature market towards other potential markets (such as inland tourism, cultural tourism, spa tourism and sport tourism) must be highlighted. Sports tourism main references in Alicante are golf and nautical tourism. This diversification aims for breaking seasonal demand in order to maintain tourist activity the whole year.

On the other hand, construction is a consolidated sector in Alicante province. It provides 14% of GVA (INE 2005) and, therefore, it is one of the province economic forces. This sector showed a very remarkable growth (around 4% per year) between 1996 and 2004. Second residence construction, for Spaniards and foreigners, is the actual key of this sector. Housing developments next to golf courses, located in the coast and inland, are becoming a high value alternative along with apartments by the sea, with which most of the coastal towns are crammed.

There are 14.5 equivalent golf courses (1 equivalent golf course has 18 holes; 0.5 equivalent golf course has 9 holes) in Alicante province at the moment, what means around 5% of Spanish golf courses. The number of golf courses since 1985 to now has quintupled in Alicante province (Figure 1).

Methodology

Two pre - tests were carried out before elaborating the final questionnaire that is shown in Table 1. Three groups were interviewed (golf course managers, golf players and Alicante’s population) in order

to know their opinions and the differences among them (Luque 1999; Rodríguez 1999):

a) Golf course managers:

The size of this group is not very large, so exhaustive analysis was chosen as the method for obtaining information. Information was obtained via personal interviews, having arranged an appointment previously on the telephone. There are 15 facilities with golf courses in Alicante province and 13 of them (86%) were interviewed with this questionnaire.

b) Golf players

The number of golf players in Alicante province is around 136,100; 17% are Spanish and the rest are foreigners. The data were provided by the Golf courses association of Alicante province for 2004, from the green fees paid in golf courses. The sample size was of 400 questionnaires with a confidence level of 95.5% and a sample error lower than 5%. A random sampling proportionally fixed to the number of golf players in each course was used to determine the number of interviews in each one.

c) Population of Alicante province.

In function of Alicante’s population the sample size obtained is of 416 questionnaires with a confidence level of 95.5% and a sample error lower than 5%. A random sampling proportionally fixed to the number of inhabitants in each town was used to determine the number of interviews for each town.

The initial methodology used for the analysis of the results was univariant descriptive analysis. Questions were analyzed keeping in mind their type of variable. Therefore, closed questions with nominal variables were processed through proportion analysis;

Table 1 Questionnaire

1. Farmers' incomes are being shrunk due to different reasons. Could you point out, which activities you would recommend to improve it. (Mark as many as wanted)
a) Quality products b) Organic products c) Agritourism d) Environment are e) Golf courses f) Renewable energies (sun / wind)
2. Related to construction. Do you agree or not with these statements? Yes / No / Do not Know
<input type="checkbox"/> a) Golf is an excuse to urbanize new areas. <input type="checkbox"/> b) Golf union with urbanization harms golf image (as a sport). <input type="checkbox"/> c) A golf course improves urbanization environment. <input type="checkbox"/> d) Golf courses and urbanizations should be separated.
3. Related to tourism. Do you agree or not with these statements? Yes / No / Do not Know
<input type="checkbox"/> a) Golf attracts tourist investments. <input type="checkbox"/> b) Golf provides quality tourism. <input type="checkbox"/> c) Golf attracts tourism that compensates traditional tourism seasonability. <input type="checkbox"/> d) Golf implies environmental respectful tourism. <input type="checkbox"/> e) Golf tourism can enrich community culture.
4. Do you agree or not with these statements? Yes / No / Do not Know
<input type="checkbox"/> a) Golf development harms the development of Spanish traditional sports. Mention 2 sports: <input type="checkbox"/> b) Golf soon will become a popular sport in Alicante.
5. Do you agree or not with these statements? Yes / No / Do not Know
<input type="checkbox"/> a) Golf should be promoted through public schools. <input type="checkbox"/> b) Municipal golf courses construction should be promoted. <input type="checkbox"/> c) Land expropriation for public golf courses construction.
6. There are 15 golf courses in Alicante province at the present time. You think there are....
a) Very few b) Very few c) Enough d) Many e) Too many
7. There are 38 new projected golf course s. What do you think now?
a) Very few b) Very few c) Enough d) Many e) Too many
8. Do you think that golf matches with Alicante way of life? Yes / No / Do not Know. How?
9. Do you have friends (or know people) related to golf? Yes / No
10. What do you think about golf players?
a) Well, they are polite and formal people b) I think they are strange c) They are new rich people d) Normal
11. When they are not playing golf, What do you think that golf tourists do here? Mark 1
a) Cultural tourism: museums, monuments. b) Rural tourism c) Sun and beach tourism d) Urban tourism.
12. Value from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive) the influence of golf courses on:
a) Economy b) Employment c) Territorial development d) Improvement of environment and landscape conditions e) Maintenance of cultural heritage off the place where it is located. f) Sport g) Social status h) Foreigners' integration

closed questions with scale variables were analysed through main statistics (average, mode, variance, standard deviation, minimum and maximum). After that, Pearson's Chi square and Mann-Whitney

U tests were used to analyse the differences among the opinions of the three groups (Hair et al., 2000). The analysis package was the SPSS 14.0 for Windows.

Opinion about the economic impact of golf courses

Golf in relation with three sectors (agriculture, construction and tourism) has been analysed in order to study the economic impact of golf courses (Questions 1, 2 and 3). These three questions have qualitative variables. The analysis of homogeneity is shown in Table 2.

Firstly, it is analyzed golf influence on agriculture. In question 1 the interviewed were asked about which activities would they recommend to improve farmers' incomes. They could mark all the options they considered from a given list. Golf course managers chose "quality products" as their first option (50% of the answers) and their second option was "to build golf courses" (42%). Golf players chose "to build golf courses" and "quality products" as their first options (92%). Alicante's population preferred "quality products" (50%) and

chose "golf courses" (16%) in the last place (Figure 2).

Secondly, the golf relation with construction is analyzed by asking the interviewed to express their agreement or disagreement with four sentences (Figure 3). These sentences are: a) Golf is an excuse to develop new housing areas; b) Golf relation with housing development harms the image of golf as a sport; c) A golf course improves the environment in housing areas, and d) Golf courses and housing areas should be separated. The three groups think that golf is an excuse to develop new housing areas (85% managers, 51% players and 67% population) and that golf courses improves the environment in housing areas (100% managers, 70% players and 63% population). Only the managers agree with the housing development harms the image of golf as sport (58%). At last, only the population disagrees with that golf courses and housing areas should be separated (37%).

Table 2 Analysis of homogeneity of the opinion about golf economic impacts
Qualitative variables

	H0: mG1=mG2=mG3						2 groups		2 groups		2 groups	
	SI p>0,05 Homogeneity						G1 vs G2		G1 vs G3		G2 vs G3	
	SI p<0,05 Significant differences						Chi2	Pearson	Chi2	Pearson	Chi2	Pearson
	Managers	G1	Players	G2	Population	G3	Chi2	P	Chi2	P	Chi2	P
	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no						
Q1a	50,00	50,00	92,59	7,41	50,24	49,76	16,87	0,00	0,00	0,99	49,66	0,00
Q1b	16,67	83,33	84,62	15,38	40,87	59,13	24,32	0,00	2,84	0,09	43,22	0,00
Q1c	8,33	91,67	83,58	16,42	35,34	64,66	28,68	0,00	3,76	0,05	55,13	0,00
Q1d	16,67	83,33	79,59	20,41	42,79	57,21	17,32	0,00	3,27	0,07	23,86	0,00
Q1e	41,67	58,33	92,13	7,87	16,11	83,89	22,56	0,00	5,45	0,02	203,75	0,00
Q1f	0,00	100,00	78,18	21,82	44,47	55,53	26,19	0,00	9,40	0,00	22,10	0,00
Q2a	83,30	16,70	51,50	36,40	67,10	21,60	4,99	0,08	1,95	0,38	24,22	0,00
Q2b	58,30	41,70	36,20	50,20	31,70	54,80	3,36	0,19	4,53	0,10	2,02	0,36
Q2c	100,00	0,00	70,10	21,40	62,70	27,60	5,05	0,08	7,01	0,03	5,33	0,07
Q2d	50,00	50,00	52,70	41,70	37,30	46,60	0,87	0,65	2,46	0,29	33,15	0,00
Q3a	100,00	0,00	95,40	1,90	88,20	6,30	0,58	0,75	1,60	0,45	14,64	0,00
Q3b	100,00	0,00	87,40	7,30	64,90	24,30	1,73	0,42	6,39	0,04	59,22	0,00
Q3c	100,00	0,00	84,70	5,80	64,70	18,50	2,16	0,34	6,46	0,04	46,97	0,00
Q3d	91,70	8,30	74,80	17,70	41,30	10,60	1,93	0,38	12,13	0,00	94,86	0,00
Q3e	75,00	25,00	60,90	28,40	42,10	41,60	1,71	0,43	5,68	0,06	29,50	0,00

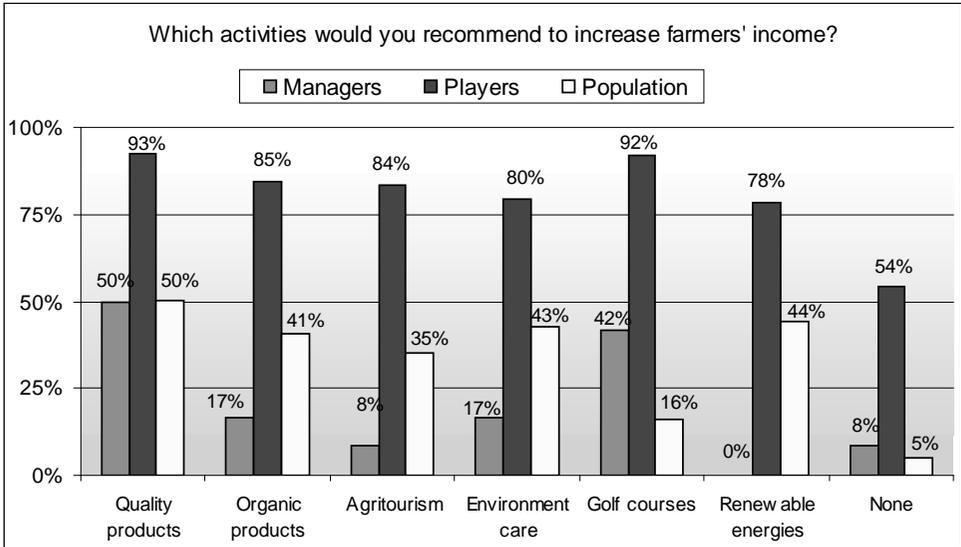


Figure 2 Answers distribution to question 1

Finally, golf relation to tourism is analysed by asking the interviewed about their degree of agreement with five sentences (Amorós 2003): a) Golf attracts tourist investment; b) Golf provides quality tourism; c) Golf attracts tourism that compensates the

traditional seasonal character of tourism; d) Golf promotes a respectful tourism with the environment; and e) Golf tourism can enrich community culture. The results are in Figure 4. A high degree of agreement was found in relation to golf attracts tourist

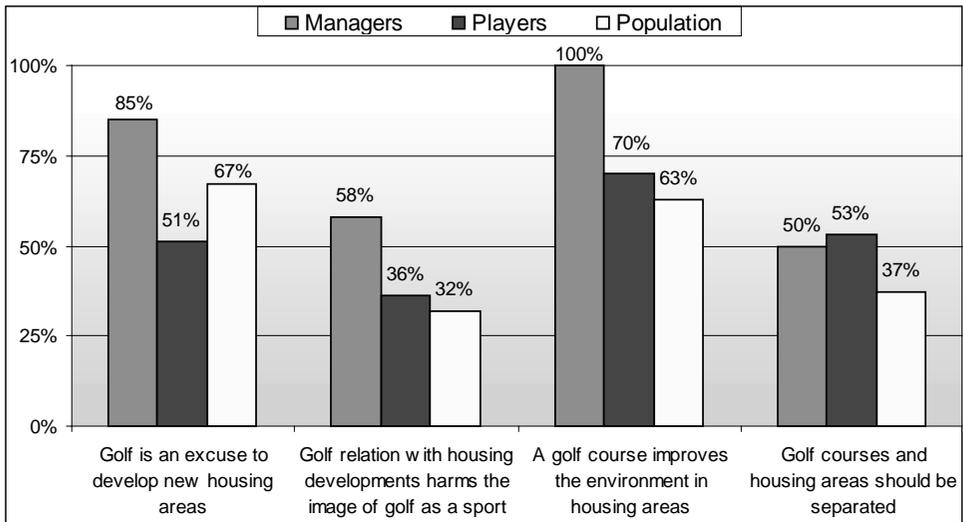


Figure 3 Answers distribution to question 2

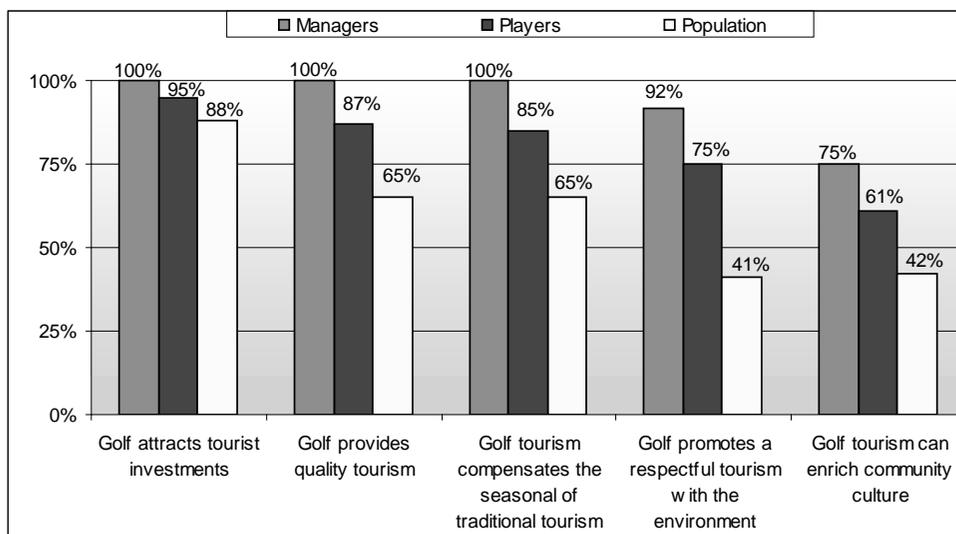


Figure 4 Answer distribution to question 3

investments (100% managers, 95% players and 88% population). There are similar positive opinion about that golf provides quality tourism and that compensated the seasonal traditional tourism between managers (100%) and players (87% and 85%); and also in the population but with less value in both questions (65%). Managers and players have positive opinion but with small differences in relation with that golf promotes a respectful tourism with the environment (92% and 75%) and golf tourism can enrich the community culture (75% and 61%); but population disagree in both (41% and 42%).

Opinion about the social impact of golf courses

This part consists of three big sections. The first one tries to summarize the influence of golf in Alicante province (Questions 4, 5, 6 and 7). In the second, opinions of the three groups about golf players and tourists in the province are analyzed (Questions 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12).

The analysis of the differences among the proportions of the qualitative variables of this section is shown in Table 3 (Questions 4, 5, 8, 9 and 11).

Table 4 shows the analysis of the significant differences of quantitative variables in this section (Questions 6, 7, and 12).

Firstly, golf influence in Alicante province is analyzed through golf implications (Question 4) and through the opinion of the interviewed people about municipal golf courses (Questions 5). This part also studies the opinion about the number of golf courses at present, after giving information of how many are there, and the opinion whether they would agree with the fact that all the projected golf courses were eventually built is also asked (Questions 6 and 7).

Three statements were proposed in order to analyse golf implications (Question 4): a) Golf development harms the development of Spanish traditional sports and b) Golf will soon become a popular sport in Alicante.

Table 3 Analysis of homogeneity of the opinion on the social impacts of golf Qualitative variables

	H0: mG1=mG2=mG3						2 groups		2 groups		2 groups	
	SI p>0,05 Homogeneity						G1 vs G2		G1 vs G3		G2 vs G3	
	SI p<0,05 Significant differences						Chi2 Pearson		Chi2 Pearson		Chi2 Pearson	
	Managers	G1	Players	G2	Population	G3	Chi2	P	Chi2	P	Chi2	P
	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	%yes	%no	Chi2	P	Chi2	P	Chi2	P
Q4a	0,00	100,00	2,70	93,90	8,90	82,70	0,77	0,68	2,50	0,29	25,59	0,00
Q4b	91,70	8,30	83,30	9,50	40,40	43,30	0,99	0,61	12,66	0,00	165,43	0,00
Q5a	100,00	0,00	83,00	11,20	33,20	55,80	2,44	0,29	22,88	0,00	218,05	0,00
Q5b	100,00	0,00	72,80	16,30	37,30	51,00	4,43	0,11	19,30	0,00	121,72	0,00
Q5c	50,00	33,30	37,10	32,50	25,70	67,30	1,24	0,54	6,15	0,05	119,45	0,00
Q8	83,30	16,70	74,00	9,50	31,00	40,00	2,74	0,25	14,91	0,00	166,05	0,00
Q9	100,00	0,00	99,27	0,73	43,99	56,01	0,09	0,77	14,75	0,00	310,42	0,00
Q10a	58,33	41,67	26,46	73,54	31,01	68,99	5,96	0,01	4,02	0,05	2,10	0,15
Q10b	0,00	100,00	3,16	96,84	6,73	93,27	0,39	0,53	0,86	0,35	5,62	0,02
Q10c	0,00	100,00	4,85	95,15	16,59	83,41	0,61	0,43	2,37	0,12	29,70	0,00
Q10d	41,67	58,33	65,53	34,47	45,67	54,33	2,91	0,09	0,08	0,78	33,07	0,00
Q11a	8,33	91,67	7,04	92,96	12,02	87,98	0,03	0,86	0,15	0,70	5,95	0,01
Q11b	8,33	91,67	4,37	95,63	11,06	88,94	0,43	0,51	0,09	0,77	12,98	0,00
Q11c	58,33	41,67	59,47	40,53	55,29	44,71	0,01	0,94	0,04	0,83	1,48	0,22
Q11d	25,00	75,00	29,13	70,87	21,63	78,37	0,10	0,76	0,08	0,78	6,14	0,01

The results are shown in Figure 5. The three groups disagree with that golf development harms the Spanish traditional sports (0% managers, 3% players and 9% population). Managers and players show a high degree of agreement in their positive answers about golf will be a popular sport in Alicante (92% and 83%), but the population doesn't think the same (40%).

An interesting aspect is the promotion of public golf courses, as there is not any golf course of this kind in Alicante province at present (Figure 6). It seems necessary to study the population's opinion about this in order to know if there is a social demand (Question 5a): the managers (100%) and golf players (83%) agree the promotion of golf public schools, but only the 33% of

Table 4 Analysis of homogeneity of the opinion on the social impacts of the golf Quantitative variables

	H0: mG1=mG2=mG3						2 groups		2 groups		2 groups	
	SI p>0,05 Homogeneity						G1 vs G2		G1 vs G3		G2 vs G3	
	SI p<0,05 Significant differences						U Mann-Whitney		U Mann-Whitney		U Mann-Whitney	
	Managers	G1	Players	G2	Population	G3	U	P	U	P	U	P
	Average	DT	Average	DT	Average	DT	U	P	U	P	U	P
Q6	1,83	0,39	2,32	0,76	3,38	1,06	1516	0,01	475	0,00	40137	0,00
Q7	3,00	0,85	3,58	0,96	4,20	0,87	1629,5	0,03	882	0,00	55190	0,00
Q12a	4,83	0,39	4,21	0,94	3,75	1,09	1538	0,02	981	0,00	64418	0,00
Q12b	4,50	0,80	3,94	0,99	3,58	1,06	1673	0,04	1259	0,00	69279	0,00
Q12c	4,33	0,98	3,68	1,12	3,19	1,21	1666	0,05	1228	0,00	66263,5	0,00
Q12d	4,25	0,75	3,55	1,17	2,88	1,29	1635	0,04	1008,5	0,00	60864,5	0,00
Q12e	3,33	1,15	2,89	1,19	2,63	1,24	1911	0,17	1683,5	0,05	75456,5	0,00
Q12f	4,83	0,39	4,44	0,86	3,80	1,10	1879	0,10	1035	0,00	55239,5	0,00
Q12g	3,50	1,24	3,66	1,11	3,63	1,22	2303,5	0,69	2315	0,66	84732	0,82
Q12h	4,25	0,75	3,68	1,23	3,07	1,38	1867,5	0,14	1275	0,00	64201,5	0,00

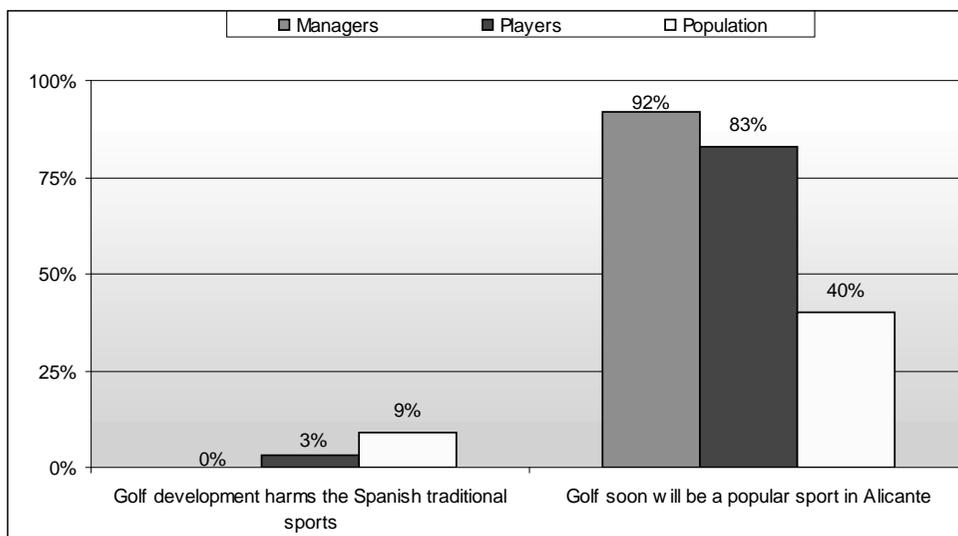


Figure 5 Answer distribution to question 4

Alicante’s population answered yes. There is a similar structure of answers about if should be promoted the construction of public golf courses (Question 5b) (100% managers, 73% players and 38% population). The three groups disagree with

land expropriation for building public golf courses (Question 5c) (50% managers, 37% players and 26% population).

Another aspect that the survey analyses is the opinion about whether there are many

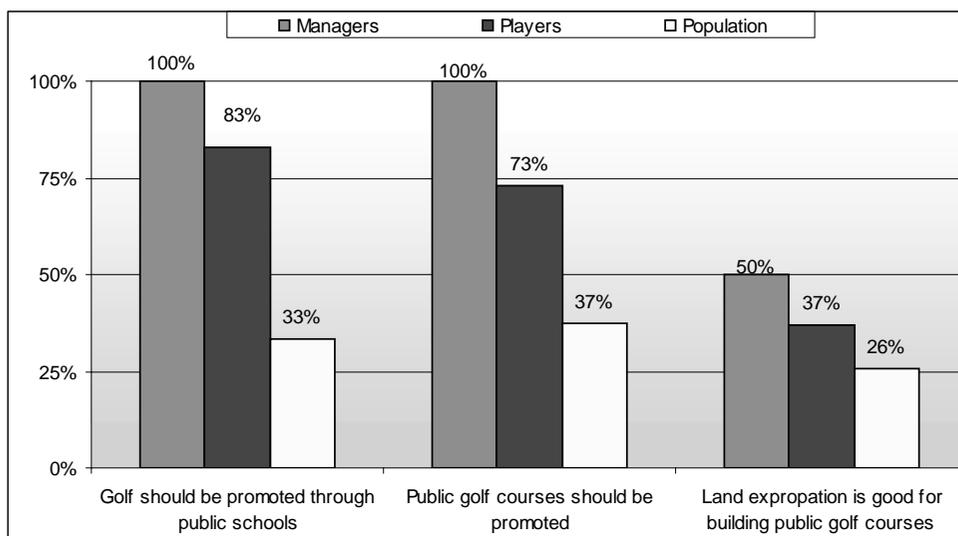


Figure 6 Answers distribution to question 5

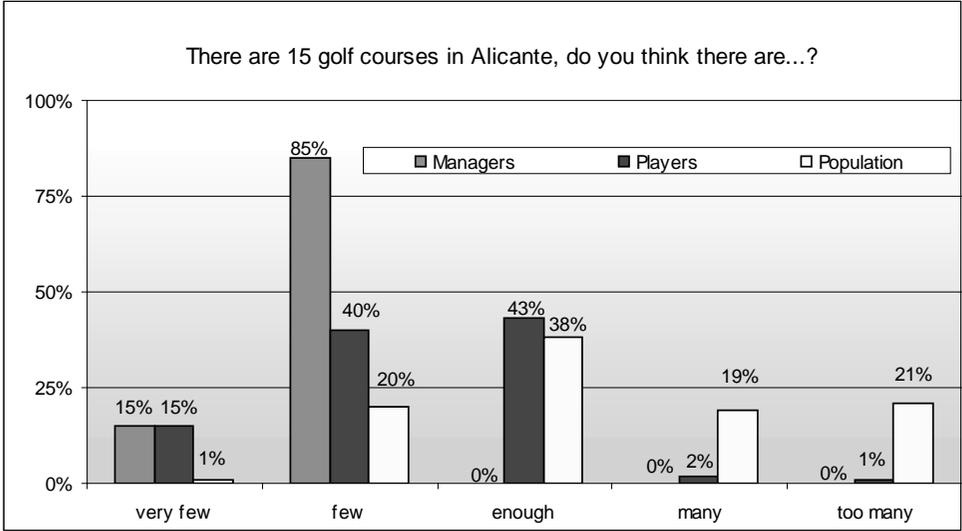


Figure 7 Answer distribution to question 6

or few golf courses in Alicante province (Question 6, Figure 7). Managers and players think that now Alicante province has not enough golf courses (85% of managers said “few” and the rest said “very few; and 40% of players answered “few” and 15% “very few”). The opinion of Alicante’s

population is contrary: 38% said “enough”, 19% “many” and 21% “too many”.

The interviewed were also asked about a possible increase in the number of golf courses in Alicante province with 38 new golf courses (Question 7, Figure 8). Most

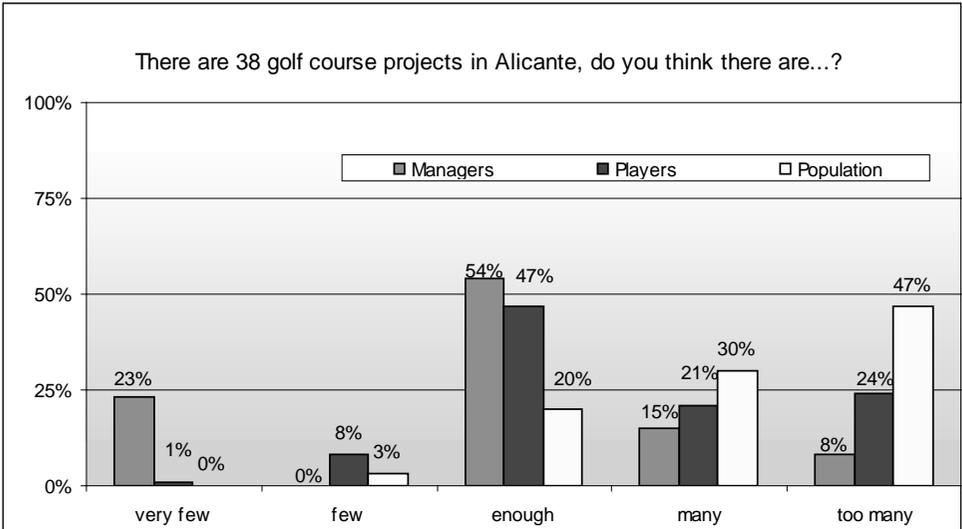


Figure 8 Answer distribution to question 7

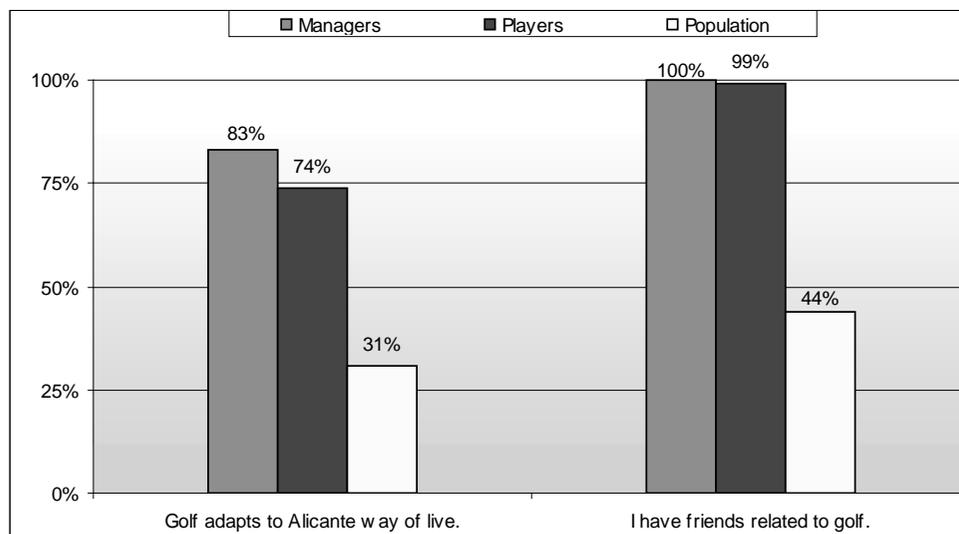


Figure 9 Affirmative answer Distribution to questions 8 and 9

of the managers and players said that is “enough” (54 % and 47%), but the majority of the population said that is “too many” (47%) and “many” (30%).

Secondly, the opinion of the interviewed about how golf adapts to the Alicante way of life was analyzed (Question 8). Also, they were asked if they had friends related to golf (Questions 9). This part of the survey also studied the opinion about golf players (Question 10) and what do they think about what tourists that come to Alicante to play golf do (Question 11).

In question 8 the 83% of managers and 74% of golf players consider golf matches with the Alicante way of life, but only 31% of population agrees with this statement (Figure 9).

An open question was made in order to know how golf adapts to the Alicante way of living. The main reason for managers is “weather” (47% of answers); the second reason is “work timetables allow more free time for leisure” (20% of answers). Other

reasons are “it is a sport to play with family or friends”, “existing leisure culture” and “life quality in Alicante”. The main reason given by golf players is “weather” (36%), followed by “outdoor life” (9%), “adaptable to all kinds of people” and “healthy sport” (8% of the interviewed each), “family/social sport” and “it helps to foreigner’s integration” (6%). The rest of reasons mean less than 5%. Lastly, the main reason among population is “outdoor life” (46%); followed by “the pleasure of nature” (10% of answers), “weather” and “healthy sport” with 6% of answers each.

Also, an open question was introduced in the questionnaire in order to know why golf does not adapt to the way of living in Alicante. As it was described above, only two managers do not think that golf fits with Alicante’s way of life; both think that the reason is “not enough free time”. 9% of golf players say golf does not match with Alicante’s way of life. The main reason is “expensive” (35%); followed by “not enough free time” (22%) and “elitist sport” and “only for foreigners” with 10% of the answers each.

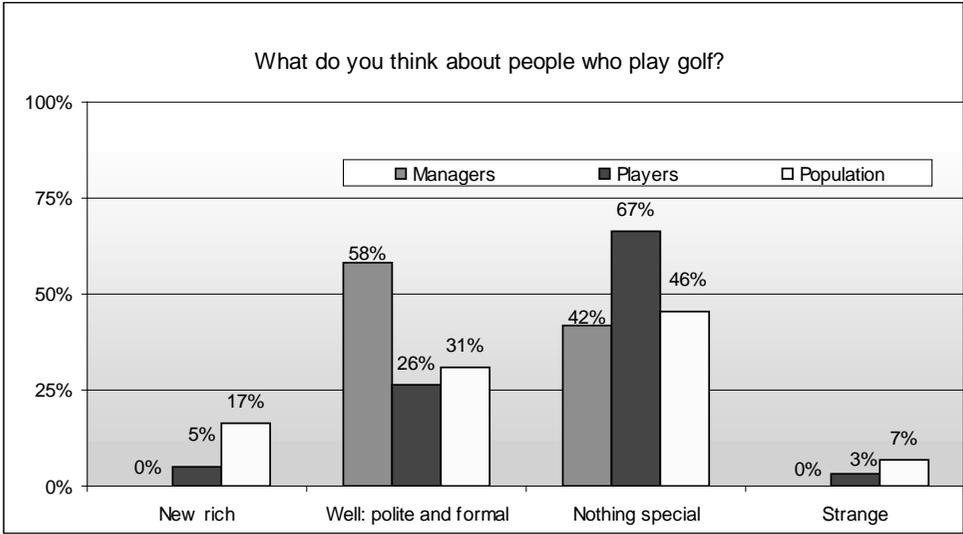


Figure 10 Affirmative answer distribution to question 10

Lastly, 41% of Alicante’s population says that golf does not adapt to Alicante’s way of life. The main reasons are it is a “sport of foreigners” (24%), “lack of water” (19%), “expensive sport” (16%), “not enough free time” (12%) and “elitist sport” (10%).

In question 9 they were asked if they had friends related to golf. Obviously, 100% of managers answered yes. Also 99% of golf players have friends related to golf. The population showed a smaller percentage: 44% (Figure 9).

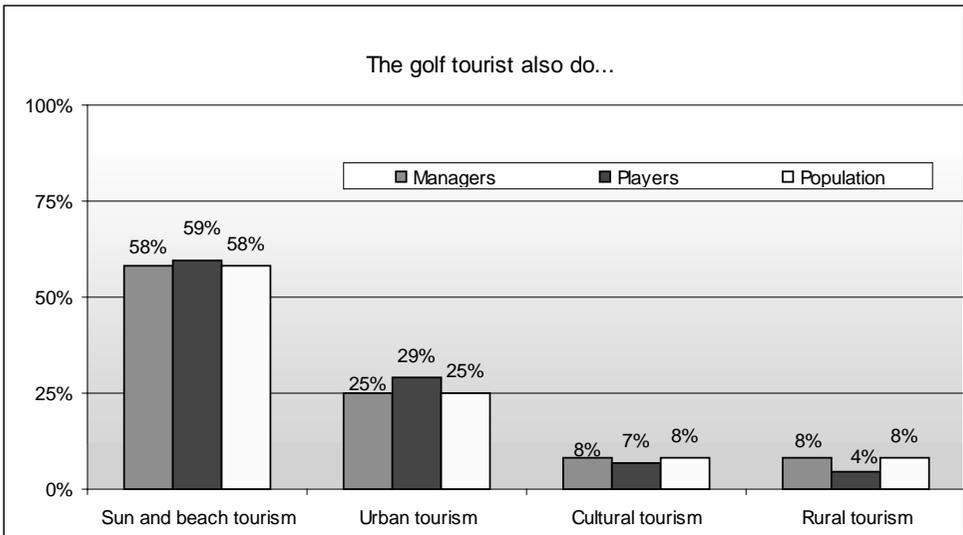


Figure 10 Affirmative answer distribution to question 10

Table 5 Valuation of golf courses influence on...

Golf influence on...	Managers		Players		Population	
	Average	Mode	Average	Mode	Average	Mode
Economy	4,8	5	4,2	5	3,8	4
Employment	4,5	5	3,9	5	3,6	4
Territorial development	4,3	5	3,7	3	3,2	3
Landscape improvement	4,2	4	3,5	4	2,9	4
Cultural heritage	3,4	3	2,9	3	2,6	3
Sport	4,8	5	4,4	5	3,8	4
Social status	3,5	3	3,7	3	3,6	5
Foreigners integration	4,3	5	3,7	5	3,1	3

Note: 1=very negative; 2=negative; 3=indifferent; 4= positive; 5=very positive

In question 10 the interviewed were asked their opinion about people who play golf (Figure 10). The general opinion of the three groups is that are “normal” (42% managers, 67% players and 46% population) or “well” (58% managers, 26% players and 31% population). The elitist image of golf players is not real because only the 17% of population, 5% of players and 0% of managers think so.

Question 11 analyses the opinions about what tourists that plays golf do and answers are shown in Figure 11. The most chosen option is “sun and beach tourism” (58% managers, 59% players and 58% population). It is followed by “urban tourism” (25% managers, 29% players and 25% population), “cultural tourism” (8% managers, 7% players and 8% population) and “rural tourism” (8% managers, 4% players and 8% population).

Table 5 shows the value of golf influence on several socioeconomic aspects. These aspects were ranked by the interviewed from 1 to 5 in Question 12. Managers marked with a 5 (very positive) the relationship of golf courses with economy, employment, territorial development, sport and foreigners’ integration. They marked with a 4 (positive) the relationship of golf courses with the improvement of the landscape and

environmental conditions. Managers marked with a 3 (indifferent) the relationship of golf courses with the maintenance of cultural heritage and with social status. Golf players also marked with a 5 the influence of golf courses on economy, employment, sport and foreigners’ integration. They marked with a 4 the influence of golf courses on the improvement of the landscape and environmental conditions. They chose a 3 for the influence of golf courses on territorial development, on maintenance of cultural heritage and on social status.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this paper was to analyse the opinions of golf players, Alicante’s population and golf courses managers (and the differences among them) about the economic and social impact of golf courses in a tourist destination (Alicante province, in Spain) through the data collected in three surveys.

First, the most important conclusions about the opinion of the economic impact of golf courses on other economic sectors such as agriculture, construction and tourism are:

1. With regards to agriculture, building golf courses has been the best alternative

given by players and the second one by managers, while for Alicante's population it is a secondary alternative.

2. With regards to construction, the three groups say golf is used as an excuse to develop housing projects, although a golf course improves housing areas' environment. Managers think the relation golf-housing development harms golf's image. Managers and players think golf courses and these areas should be separated. However, Alicante's population does not think so.
3. With regards to tourism, there is a high level of agreement among the three groups about how golf attracts tourist investment, about its quality and how golf helps decreasing traditional tourism seasonal character. Managers and golf players also say it is tourism respectful with the environment and that golf enriches local culture. 40% of Alicante's population agrees with these last statements.

Secondly, the main conclusions about social impact of golf courses in the province of Alicante are:

1. The three groups agree that golf development does not harm the development of our traditional sports.
2. All the managers and almost all the golf players agree that golf will soon become a popular sport in Alicante. However, just 40% of Alicante's population agrees with them.
3. All the managers and almost all the golf players agree with the idea of golf promotion in local schools. However, only 33% of Alicante's population supports it.
4. All the managers say there are "few" or "very few" golf courses in Alicante province and most of golf players

agree with them. On the other hand, Alicante's population considers there are "enough."

5. With regards to the 38 new projects to build golf courses in Alicante province, managers consider there will still be "few" golf courses. Golf players think there will be "enough" or "many". Alicante's population believes there will be "too many" or "many."
6. Most of managers and golf players (66%) think golf fits with Alicante's way of live, but only half of it (31%) of Alicante's population thinks the same.
7. The main reason for managers and golf players who think that golf fit with Alicante's way of life is "the weather".
8. The main reason for golf players who think that golf does not fit with Alicante's way of life is because it is "expensive". The reason for Alicante's population is that it is a "sport of foreigners."
9. The managers' opinion about golf players is "fine, they are polite and formal". However, the opinion of golf players and Alicante's population about them is "normal".
10. All the groups think golf tourists who come to Alicante province also come here for "sun and beach tourism".
11. Finally, all the managers and golf players have friends related with golf. Only 44% of Alicante's population has friends (or acquaintances) related to golf, but it is necessary to bear in mind that only 0.6% of Alicante's population plays golf.

As a final conclusion, we can state golf courses in Alicante province are creating a new economic activity that produces some economic and social impacts. Golf players and golf courses managers have a more positive opinion about this economic and

social impact than the population in the province. This is due to the knowledge of the first group about golf industry benefits. Therefore, communication about these social and economic benefits of golf courses has to be increased with the population in the area in order to improve their opinion about them.

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